

James Monroe to Andrew Jackson, August 4, 1817, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

PRESIDENT MONROE TO JACKSON.

Sacket's Harbor, August 4, 1817.

private and confidential

My dear Sir, I intended to have written you long before this on a subject, noticed in a letter just after I left Washington, but so continual has been my movement since, and laborious my duties, contrary to my expectation, that I have not been able to do it. I had deferred it therefore, until in the prosecution of my journey, I should come near you, if I could not see you. I shall still write you fully on that subject, as soon as in my power. I am just about to embark, on board a vessel for Niagara, where I hope to arrive in a few days.

The conduct of McGregor,¹ supposed to menace the tranquility of the Southern States has induced the gentlemen of the admn. to take a measure, in my absence for the public security which has made it necessary to order an officer, near the place, to perform a prompt service. Of this a copy has I understand been sent to you.

¹ Gregor McGregor, an adventurer, took possession of Amelia Island, at the mouth of St. Mary's River, in 1817, and announced his intention of driving the Spaniards from the two Floridas. The place soon became a nest for buccaneers and smugglers and American forces seized it. Jackson had orders to support them, if necessary.

From your statment and that given me by the dept of war, it appears that a misunderstanding existed on your part, as to a matter of fact, which might have led to a

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different course on your part, had you been correctly informed. The principle is clear, that every order from the dept. of war, to whomever directed, must be obeyed. I cannot think that you are of a different opinion, and it is on you, that I rely for the most decisive support of the govt. My wish is that things remain as they are, till we communicate further and fully on this subject, for you may be well satisfied, that it [is] one of my strongest wishes, to support your honor and fame. I write you this in great haste, being just about to embark, and surrounded with a vast crowd

with great respect and the most sincere regard yours

[*Indorsement, in Jackson's handwriting* :] This to be filed, and the further explanation waited for, when it is to be fully answered. A. J.